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Author: Zbigniew Kadłubek

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Genius loci – a man and the space

A place is always a reservoir of spirituality as it is painstakingly guarded by *genius loci*, a loyal and trustworthy custodian whose solicitude embraces every single manifestation of the life of a given *locus*. Compared to the sad silence of the world, the profound silence that comes from chaos, the touch of a *genius loci* is a blessing for contemporary life. The *Genius loci*, whose impulses emanate from a space, a view or a landscape, always touches us to the quick, its epiphanies are sudden, unexpected, and we can never call them our own. Affirmation of life and light constitutes the strategy of the *genius loci*, while walls, squares, domes, roofs, meadows, and beaches are ceremonious reminders of the gifts of life. Even, and perhaps most specifically, the most minute gifts of life, what Ernst Jünger calls *die kargsten Spenden dieser Welt*. Offering oneself to his or her space, his or her landscape or *landschaft* man is always a losing party, but through this peculiar loss he or she, in fact, gains and enhances his or her bond with the whole of Creation. Thus, referring to and meditating upon the *genius loci* is a sign of man's piety and respect for life. This experience has nothing in common with, and is dramatically different from, mere nostalgia or a return to the values of "blood

and soil". Amidst the noisy and extrovert world of a culture of digital, electronic networks, *genius loci*, understood as a graceful art of dialoguing with space, represents a truly human gesture through which we try to relate in a more meaningful way to the reality.

Zbigniew Kadłubek